

(Photo by Maj. Kirk Luedeke 4-1 Inf. Public Affairs)

Checkmate!

Pvt. Hershell Ross, and Sgt. Cleveland Upton, both members of 1st Battalion 28th Infantry Regiment, 4th Infantry Brigade Combat Team, 1st Infantry Division, play a game of chess in between combat patrols in Baghdad's Aamel region April 12.

Karkh doctors hold medical mission in Haifa St. clinic

By Sgt. 1st Class Kap Kim
2-1 Cav. Public Affairs

BAGHDAD - Dr. Haitham Issa, with his stethoscope, walked from exam room to exam room monitoring his staff and patients in the Al Karkh Public Health Clinic April 14.

It's something he hasn't been able to do for a while during the violence in the Karkh district, and the burden of not being able to not only do his job, but to fulfill the oath he took when becoming a doctor has been hard on his conscious.

"I'm afraid to come here, but I am a doctor; I have to give something back to

the public because they are so poor," Issa said. "It is my duty; of course there are risks - I have to take all those risks."

According to Maj. Bruce Rivers, the 2nd Brigade Combat Team, 1st Cavalry Division's brigade surgeon, the clinics in Karkh, around the Haifa Street district, all shut down due to the violence of the past year or so. Only until recently, as the Iraqi security forces and coalition forces helped provide that important piece have the local residents, doctors and other medical staff been able to come back and open up one clinic.

Approximately 180 patients from

the local area came by the clinic to seek treatment for such ailments from common colds to shrapnel wounds.

Last month, Rivers, who calls Washington, D.C. home, and a team of 4th Squadron, 9th Cavalry Regiment, 1st Cav. Div. medics went to Haifa St., and ran a sick call, of sorts.

According to Rivers, although it went well, his intent was to have the medical mission "totally" run by Iraqi doctors and nurses.

So, this time, with the local Iraqi

Karkh doctors overcome fear, fulfill their oath

Haifa

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national police and 4-9 Cav. Soldiers providing security around the area, a team of Iraqi doctors, nurses and pharmacists completely ran the medical mission.

"I've been able to stay back and work on just the planning," Rivers said.

According to Lt. Col. Patrick Matlock, 4-9 Cav.'s commander, having the Iraqi security forces lead the charge in this medical mission was a "really big deal."

"[The residents] have to associate good with their local government," said Matlock of Chico, Calif.

"They have to see the local government as strong ... our job is to make that a reality," he said.

For local doctor, Mustafa, the new level of security in and around Haifa St. is "nice."

A doctor since 1963, Mustafa, has practiced gener-



(Photo by Sgt. 1st Class Kap Kim, 2-1 Cav. Public Affairs)

A local woman brings her son in to be seen by one of the Iraqi doctors during the medical mission in Baghdad, Iraq April 14.

al surgery in that area for a long time, but had to take a break due to the recent violence.

"It's really nice to have all the security now," he said. "It was also very good to bring all the medi-

cine."

According to local health officials, the clinic plans to stay open for as long as the security in the area allows for the locals to receive the care safely, and to get back to the amount of patients it once

received.

Being able to operate as they did before has been "great" for Issa, who is happy that he gets to fulfill his duties as a doctor and also to help his fellow Iraqis.

Arabic Phrase of the Day

zaabut

**Defined:
officer**

Iraq 3-Day Weather Report



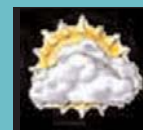
Today

**High: 86
Low: 59**



Tomorrow

**High: 90
Low: 66**



Wednesday

**High: 91
Low: 66**

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(U.S. Army photo by 1st Lt. Scott Pharis, 2-12th Cavalry)

Soldiers from 2nd Bn., 12th Cav. Regt. pull out buried ordnance at a weapons cache site they discovered in Baghdad's Ghazaliya district April 15.

Cache found in western Ghazaliya

**By Sgt. Michael Leonhardy
2-12 Cav.**

BAGHDAD - During a night patrol in the farm fields of western Ghazaliya April 14, Soldiers from Multi-National Division-Baghdad found what they thought to be an improvised rocket launcher. This small find led to a very large cache buried nearby.

While moving through a field, observers from the Fort Bliss, Texas-based 2nd Battalion, 12th Cavalry Regiment, 2nd Brigade Combat Team, 1st Infantry Division, noticed three pieces of ordnance with the improvised rocket launcher in a cinderblock shack. The Soldiers secured the area and waited for daylight to excavate the site.

When sunrise came April 15, the observers linked up with the rest of their Scout Platoon and started investigating the site. 1st Lt. Scott Pharis, on advice from his platoon sergeant, called in an explosive ordnance disposal team to help with the live ordnance.

Initially, all the Soldiers found was a wooden box, about the size of a coffin, buried next to the shack. Further investigation found mounds of dirt that looked like they had been recently disturbed.

"Initially, we thought there was a

small cache, maybe only ten rounds. Every time we picked up one round, we would find three more buried in the dirt around it," said Pharis.

As the Soldiers began to dig, they realized they could not even see how deep the cache went.

The Scout Platoon and EOD worked vigorously for 14 hours straight to remove all the ordnance out of the deep mud holes of the cache.

What they found were 178 120mm mortar rounds, 126 57mm rockets, 108 unidentified rounds, four homemade bombs, seven shape charges, three initiators, two 81mm mortars, two cell phones, three hand grenades, two rocket-propelled grenade warheads, one 130mm mortar round and one 155mm artillery round.

After all the dust had settled, the Scout Platoon uncovered more than 400 different pieces of explosive material and munitions. This marks the biggest cache found by 2-12th Cavalry since the battalion took over their sector of the Iraqi capital in early November.

EOD conducted a controlled detonation to blow the ordnance in place. The explosion was so big it was felt by Soldiers at Camp Liberty, more than six miles away.

Baghdad in Brief

Clearing operation nets five weapons caches in Mansour

BAGHDAD - Coalition forces and Iraqi Army troops continued clearing operations in the Iraqi capital's Mansour security district, uncovering five weapons caches April 21 during Operation Arrowhead Strike 9.

The weapons and ammunition discovered included one submachine gun, five AK-47 assault rifles with eight full magazines, two pistols with four full magazines, one full can of blasting caps used for improvised explosive devices, two small two-way radios and one sword.

Iraqi Army troops from 1st Battalion, 5th Brigade, 5th Iraqi Army Division, along with U.S. Army Soldiers from the 3rd Stryker Brigade Combat Team, 2nd Infantry Division participated in the clearing operation.

ISF respond in aftermath of terrorist attacks

BAGHDAD - Iraqi police and emergency services responded to a pair of vehicle-borne improvised explosive device detonations in southwestern Baghdad that killed 25 Iraqi civilians and wounded 50 more, including 15 Iraqi security forces, in a morning attack near an Iraqi police station April 22.

Iraqi police and Multi-National Division - Baghdad troops arrived on scene in Baghdad's Risalah neighborhood shortly after the 10 a.m. attack, established checkpoints and began to evacuate the wounded to local hospitals.

Iraqi emergency service personnel also responded to the scene, extinguishing several fires and assisting with the medical treatment of bystanders injured in the blasts.

A third VBIED detonated in the West Rashid security district at approximately 4:20 p.m., killing four Iraqi civilians and wounding 10 others.

A patrol from Company C, 1st Battalion, 18th Infantry Regiment, 4th Brigade Combat Team, 1st Infantry Division responded to the explosion site providing security and assistance to the Iraqi Police and emergency personnel with casualty evacuation.

Protect yourself against crawling, flying vermin

By Sgt. Nicole Kojetin
1st Cav. Public Affairs

CAMP LIBERTY, Iraq - Creepy crawlers, pests, vermin, insects, bugs... whatever they are called, most people would consider them annoying but rarely think of them as being dangerous.

But they can be.

Moving to a different part of the world means that there are different dangers within the bites and stings of the flying and crawling critters than in the United States.

"The biggest threats here are the mosquitoes and sand flies," said Capt. Ruben Ortiz, an environmental science officer for Multi-National Division - Baghdad. "The mosquitoes from the Anopheles species can carry malaria, and the sand flies can carry Leishmaniasis."

Malaria makes people ill with fevers and severe chills that could result in death, if not treated.

Leishmaniasis affects the health of the skin, creating large open sores.

"When the infected sand fly bites, the parasite gets under the skin cells creating slow healing wounds that are much like ulcers," said Maj. Chris Medellin, a preventive medicine officer with MND-B.

The San Antonio native stressed the importance of getting medical attention as soon as possible, noting that Leishmaniasis will leave large scars.

"As soon as you notice a fever with chills or an infect-



(Graphic by Dr. D.S. Martin, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention)

Leishmaniasis, a disease spread by sand flies, creates ulcer-like sores on the skin. Maj. Chris Medellin, a Multi-National Division - Baghdad preventive medicine officer, said that is important to seek treatment immediately after discovering symptoms of the disease.

ed sore, it is time to come in," Medellin said.

As the warmer months are swiftly approaching, bugs are out and active and the Soldiers living without common amenities are more vulnerable.

"Due to the surge, we have more Soldiers living in tents or in (joint security stations) instead of trailers," Medellin said. "The threat is higher in those living conditions."

"Many of the JSSs use (barriers made from loose sand and rocks) and sandbags. These are great habitats for sand flies," Ortiz said. "The standing water is an issue, too. That is a breeding ground for mosquitoes."

Ortiz, from San Sebastian, Puerto Rico, said that it is essential for com-

manders to adopt and enforce the Department of Defense Insect Repellent System.

This system starts with ensuring that Soldiers treat their uniforms with Permethrin, which is the standard military insect repellent that can last for approximately 50 uniform washes, said Ortiz. The uniform itself is a barrier against insects, too.

Next, they should apply the insect repellent DEET to all exposed skin. One application can last up to 12 hours, he said.

"The Soldiers (on the ground) need to remember that when they take off that uniform, the skin underneath is no longer protected. Applying additional DEET before going to bed can

help," said Ortiz.

He also added that using bed nets or mosquito netting also deters bugs, but sand flies can still get through if the nets are not treated with an insecticide.

Other tips, he added, were trying to avoid standing water and conducting good hygiene practices including washing uniforms frequently.

For those who are lucky enough to live in trailers, he said to limit the amount of food consumed inside, clean up crumbs and try to block areas of entry.

The staff will also do their part.

"We have traps all over, and when we reach a certain threshold of bugs per trap the contractors will spray the base," Ortiz said. On the smaller combat outposts and the joint security stations, the company field sanitation teams can spray.

The traps not only allow them to track the density of the bugs, but the collections get shipped to Europe to be tested for diseases. So, they know what the troops are facing.

Medellin, also, warned against other critters, such as snakes and scorpions.

"If you get stung, don't try to catch it or suck the venom out," he said.

"You are just wasting valuable time. Get to the nearest medical facility," he said.

Avoidance and the use of insect repellent, Medellin stressed, is key to preventing vermin-related illnesses and injuries.

Tomahawk troop trades in battlefield for college classroom

By Spc. Jeffrey Ledesma
1st Cav. Public Affairs

BAGHDAD - Transitioning from fighting on the battlefields of the war-torn Iraqi capital to reading the pages of heavy textbooks in a college classroom is a change of scenery one Soldier is about to make.

As Pfc. Joshua Ruth, an infantryman with 2nd Platoon, Company C, 1st Battalion, 23rd Infantry Regiment, 3rd Stryker Brigade Combat Team, 2nd Infantry Division, nears the end of his first deployment, he gets ready to go back to school through the Army's "Green to Gold" program.

The program is designed to allow qualified and inspired young enlisted Soldiers, like Ruth, to return to college, receive their baccalaureate degree and earn a commission as an Army officer.

The Elizabethtown, Ky., native found his higher calling and signed up to become a Soldier a couple days after Christmas 2005. Even with a brief stint in the Army, he has heard of the many opportunities the Army offers its Soldiers.

"When I heard about the Green to Gold program, I thought it was a good idea to take what enlisted guys learn and apply them as officers like the basics of working with a team, with a squad, with a platoon," Ruth said.

He said he thinks having a deployment to add to his repertoire and all the experiences being on the ground will make him, or any cadet, a more rounded Soldier.

"It's good to have a deployment under your belt. (Ruth) will have experienced things first hand and the things



(Photo by Spc. Jeffrey Ledesma 1st Cav. Public Affairs)

Pfc. Joshua Ruth, with Co. C, 1st Bn., 23rd Inf. Regt., 3rd SBCT, 2nd Inf. Div., communicates with the driver and vehicle commander while he pulls rear security during a clearing operation in the Iraqi capital's Ghazaliyah neighborhood while the remaining members of his squad conduct searches of nearby houses March 24

he has experienced will help him in the future," said Pfc. Brandon Kroger, an infantryman in his squad.

But to get back into a college seat, there are some requirements Soldiers must meet.

A Soldier must be active duty for at least two years, as well as three months for every one month of specialized training, and be under the age of 27 on June 30 the year of their commission. An extension of up to three years can be given, based on years of service.

The Soldier must have a General Technical score of at least 110, have a minimum American College Test score of 19 or Standard Aptitude Test score of 920 for a three or four-year scholarship, have a cumulative high school or college grade point average of 2.5 and be a high school graduate or equivalent,

In addition to scholastic requirements, all Soldiers have to maintain physical fitness standards. The Green to Gold candi-

dates must be able to pass the Army Physical Fitness Test and meet height and weight requirements according to AR 600-9.

If Soldiers meet the standards, they must also obtain letters of recommendation from their school of choice offering the Army Reserve Officer Training Corps program and a letter from the professor of military science of that Army ROTC battalion.

Candidates must also provide a favorable national agency check, go through a Department of Defense Medical Examination Review Board, which deems Soldiers physical capable of the tasks ahead, and he or she must be eligible to reenlist.

Soldiers wanting to go Green to Gold cannot have either Uniform Code of Military Justice or civil convictions, nor have any such actions pending, or been convicted of a domestic violence crime or be a conscientious objector.

Although the requirements seem many, some of them are

wavering. Two requirements which can be waived are the requirement to have no more than three dependents, including a spouse, and not be a single parent.

Ruth said if he is accepted into the program, all the hurdles he had to jump through to get his packet turned in will be well worth the effort.

"For the most part, it's been me running around getting stuff done. It's definitely more difficult to get stuff done here than it would have been in the rear," Ruth said. "Here, everyone is really busy and you're constantly running around doing missions and going in and out of the wire."

For this young trooper, becoming an officer is all about the responsibility that comes with it.

"I want to lead men into combat. It would be a pretty amazing thing. I want that responsibility," said Ruth. "I had good examples of what leadership should be, which has made me want to be a good leader for other Soldiers."

"(I want to be) someone who's willing to stand up for the guys they're responsible for, that looks out for them, teaches them."

Kroger said Ruth has the assertiveness and confidence it takes to take charge of other Soldiers and get the job done.

After graduating from school, Ruth will put on the gold bars of a second lieutenant and finish out his Army career as an officer.

"I think I'll like it," he said. "If I enjoy what I am doing and enjoy the life that I have, I am probably going to be a lifer, do my twenty years as an officer and retire."